(c) EIL is engaged in rendering PMC and consultancy services for overseas clients and is currently working in Algeria and Abu Dhabi. Amount of foreign exchange earned as professional fee from Overseas Operations during the Finance Year 2008-09 was equivalent of Indian Rupees 121.43 corers.

Fire in IOC depot at Jaipur

1339. SHRIMATI RENUBALA PRADHAN:
SHRI MANGALA KISAN:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the reasons for recent fires at Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) depot Jaipur;

(b) the other previous cases of oil depot fires during the last three years;

(c) whether Government plans to protect oil depots in Odisha alongwith all depots in the country; and

(d) whether Government would hold an enquiry and fix responsibility for such a loss?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI JITIN PRASADA): (a) and (d) A seven member inquiry committee under the chairmanship of Shri M.B. Lal, Technical Member (P&NG), Appellate Tribunal for Electricity and Ex-Chairman and Managing Director of Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited has been constituted by the Ministry on 31.10.2009 to inquire into the causes of the incident of fire at IOC depot, Jaipur and to suggest remedial measures to prevent recurrence of such incidents. The committee will submit its report within 60 days. Preliminary findings have indicated that there was massive leakage of Motor Spirit (MS) from the valve of one of the tank, which let formation of vapour cloud. Spark from an unknown source resulted in explosion of the vapour cloud, which started the fire in all the 11 tanks of the depot.

(b) During the last three years, there has been no major fire in oil depots of public sector oil companies.

(c) There is an existing mechanism to ensure the safety at all oil depots of public sector oil companies in the country, including Odisha, which includes regular safety audits to ensure, adherence to the safety norms prescribed by OISD Petroleum and Explosives Safety Organization (PESO), State Pollution Control Boards, etc. Further, in order to take preventive steps so as to avoid such incidents in future, the Ministry convened a meeting on 3.11.209, to review the safety and security at oil and gas installations in the country, which was attended by the Chief Executive Officers of all public and major private oil companies having installations in the country.

Distribution of LPG in rural areas

1340. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether penetration of LPG in rural areas is very low; and

(b) if so, the action taken to make LPG available in all the villages in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI JITIN PRASADA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) In order to increase rural penetration and to cover remote as well as low potential areas, a new scheme namely Rajiv Gandhi Gramin LPG Vitrak Yojana (RGGLVY) for establishing small size LPG distribution agencies for the locations having potential of 600 or more refill sales per month has been launched on 16.10.2009.

The advertisement inviting applications for agencies under the RGGLVY scheme have been released by public sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) in 8 States where the reach of LPG is low namely, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal covering 1215 locations.

For setting up of additional new LPG distributors under this scheme and under Industry Marketing Plan (IMP) 2008-10, OMCs are carrying out feasibility studies for various locations across the country. It is targeted that around 5.5 crore new LPG connections shall be released till the year 2015, most of which are expected to be in rural areas/presently uncovered areas.

Royalty on crude oil

1341. SHRI KANJIBHAI PATEL: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. (ONGC) is required to pay royalty to the State Governments on crude oil and Gas based on the Wellhead price of crude oil as per the Government Notification dated 16th December, 2004, 20th August, 2007 and Resolution dated 17th March, 2007;

(b) whether Government is aware that during the period from April 2008 to December 2008; ONGC paid the royalty to the State Governments on Post Discount Prices;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether the State Government of Gujarat has represented the Central Government for payment of royalty as per aforesaid Notification and Resolution; and

(e) if so, the action taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI JITIN PRASADA): (a) The royalty on mineral oil in respect of commercial production from onland areas, is required to be paid to the State Governments at a rate fixed by the Central Government as percentage of the sale price of the mineral oil at the oil fields or the oil well head, as the case may be, under the provisions of Oilfields (Regulation and Development) Act (ORDA), 1948, and Notifications issued from time to time.